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FIG. 1. PYRAMID-FIELD OF LISHT
VIEW NORTH FROM TOP OF PYRAMID OF USERTESEN WITH PYRAMID OF
AMENEMHAT IN DISTANCE

THE EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION *

II. THE SEASON'S WORK AT THE PYRAMIDS OF LISHT



FIG. 2. HEAD OF HAWK
DETAIL FROM ENCLOSURE-WALL OF PYRA-
MID OF USERTESEN. SCALE 1:5

THE results of this second year's excavations at the twelfth dynasty pyramids of Lisht have proved completely satisfactory and have added considerably both to our knowledge of pyramid construction at that period and

* The first report of the Expedition for this year will be found in the May issue of the BULLETIN, p. 83.

to the material previously extant, representing the sculpture and the other arts of the Middle Empire.

As outlined in the May BULLETIN, during the earlier part of the season work was carried on principally on the northernmost of the two pyramids, that of Amenemhat I, and was continued there until the end of March. A detailed description of this part of the excavation will be given in a separate report by Mr. Mace. In the plan for effecting an entrance to the burial-chamber of the pyramid, mentioned in the May report, difficulties were encountered which rendered it impossible to accomplish this during the present year. The vertical shaft leading from the upper chamber in the pyramid to the burial-chamber below was found to contain a considerable amount of water, owing to the rise in the level of the Nile since ancient times. The depth of this shaft, moreover, rendered hand-pumps inadequate for removing the water and consequently it proved necessary to postpone the work until more powerful machinery could be obtained. At the beginning of the coming season it is intended to carry the work to completion by means of a belt-driven pump and oil-engine stationed outside the pyramid entrance. By this means, also, some of the deeper shafts of the large private tombs

near the pyramid, which were found to contain water, can likewise be cleared and their chambers entered, with every probability of thus recovering important material.

At the beginning of March, when the work on the pyramid of Amenemhat was nearing its end for the present season, a part of the workmen were transferred to the second of the Lisht group of pyramids, that of Usertesen I, the son and successor of Amenemhat, and a beginning was made on the excavation of this pyramid. Situated about a kilometer and a half south of that of Amenemhat, the pyramid of Usertesen stands on a low desert hill close to the edge of the Nile Valley, in a position similar to that of Amenemhat (fig. 1). The temple of this pyramid, on its eastern side, was partly cleared by the

French Institute of Oriental Archæology, during their work at Lisht in 1904-5, to which reference has already been made in these reports. At that time, also, the French expedition cleared the upper part of the causeway leading down from the temple to the valley below, and they likewise penetrated the mass of débris about the base of the pyramid by means of trenches and soundings at various points.

In beginning our work on this pyramid, in order to ascertain the exact nature of the ground and in preparation for a full season's work with a large force the coming year,

excavation was carried on for the month of March on the upper part of the causeway where the French work had ended owing to

the depth of sand covering the construction, and on the south side of the pyramid where the mass of débris about the pyramid base remained mostly undisturbed. At the former point, our work of clearing exposed the finely constructed limestone wall, lining the causeway on either side, the lower courses of which were found to be well preserved. Against the inner faces of both these walls had originally stood, at regular intervals, a series of life-size Osiride statues of Usertesen, of painted limestone, six of which (now in the Cairo Museum) were found by the French in a near-by tomb-shaft, north of the causeway, where they had been taken at some later period.

In our work another

of these statues, headless, has now been found, fallen in the causeway (fig. 3), and only a few meters from it the base of a second similar statue and a section of a Proto-Doric column in limestone. There seems every probability that the completion of the clearing of the causeway next year will result in the recovery of much of its construction and the sculptural and architectural material connected with it.

On the south side of the pyramid a large cutting made by the French had disclosed the remains of an enclosure wall, about eleven meters from the base-line of the



FIG. 3. OSIRIDE STATUE OF KING
USERTESEN

pyramid, of which they also found traces at other points. Our work on this side was devoted to following and clearing this wall, which was found to be preserved here to a

was the figure of an offering bearer. In figs. 2 and 4 are shown details of this paneled decoration.

While this work on the pyramid was in



FIG. 4. REPRESENTATION OF TOMB FAÇADE
DETAIL OF ENCLOSURE-WALL

height of two and a half meters. It was constructed of fine limestone and originally must have had a height of about five meters. It was two meters in thickness at the base, with both faces sloping slightly inward from the base up, and had a rounded top. Every five meters in its length both its outer and inner faces were ornamented with panels a meter wide and extending the entire height of the wall, bearing the Horus or "banner" name of Usertesen, of most carefully worked relief. On top of the so-called banner was the hawk of Horus, crowned with the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, and modeled in bold relief. The panel itself bore at the top the names of Usertesen, with the representation of an elaborately ornamented tomb façade below, while underneath this

progress, excavation was carried on simultaneously on a section of the contemporary cemetery surrounding the pyramid. This proved to contain large and well-constructed tombs, an investigation of which is adding further material to the facts regarding the mastaba construction of this dynasty, which the expedition had previously derived from the cemetery surrounding the earlier pyramid of Amenemhat. One of these tombs in particular, about one hundred meters north of the pyramid, is one of the best examples in point of construction of the mastabas yet uncovered here. With a superstructure consisting of an outer facing of dressed blocks, filled with a core of rough limestone and chips, a sloping passage on the north side leads down to the burial-chamber below, in which is a

sarcophagus of finely worked gray granite with curved lid. Both the entrance passage and the chamber are constructed of large blocks of limestone most carefully worked and fitted, while its builders had sought to prevent access to the chamber by means of a series of huge cubical blocks of limestone placed in the passage and completely filling it for a considerable part of its length—in the same manner that the entrance to the pyramid of Amenemhat was found to be filled with granite blocks.

In the work at Lisht next season the excavations will be continued on both the pyramids of Amenemhat and Usertesen, as well as on the cemeteries surrounding them. At the present time (June 25th) work has been discontinued for the summer months, and some of the results of the expedition

are now being sent to the Museum for exhibition as early as possible in the autumn. With photographs and other records showing methods and details of the work will be exhibited examples of the temple-relief, sculpture and classes of smaller objects yielded by the excavations. Included in the records mentioned are water-color copies of the painted temple-reliefs of Amenemhat, upon which Mr. E. Harold Jones has been engaged for several months past, and also full-sized copies in color of Theban tomb-painting, carried out during the season by Mr. N. de G. Davies.

In a succeeding number of the BULLETIN a report will be given of the excavations carried on by the expedition at the Oasis of Kharga, which were recently brought to a close for the present year. A. M. L.

